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ABSTRACT

Noting that the human capital of a nation is a primary determinant of its strength, this book reviews what is known about the processes that affect child development and how public and private investments in children might be increased to promote their well-being and to enhance the economic productivity of the next generation in America. Based on discussion of numerous scholars, policymakers, and practitioners at an October 1998 conference, the book is organized chronologically according to the life cycle until the transition to work or college, with each chapter emphasizing how developmental, school, and labor market outcomes are affected by family, school, neighborhood, and public policy inputs and interventions. Following an introduction, the chapters are: (1) "Trends in and Consequences of Investments in Children" (Lisa M. Lynch); (2) "Rethinking Education and Training Policy: Understanding the Sources of Skill Formation in a Modern Economy" (James J. Heckman and Lance Lochner); (3) "Pathways to Early Child Health and Development" (Barry Zuckerman and Robert Kahn); (4) "Early Childhood Experiences and Developmental Competence" (Sharon Landesman Ramey and Craig T. Ramey); (5) "Schooling's Influences on Motivation and Achievement" (Jacquelynne S. Eccles and Allan Wigfield); (6) "Promoting Positive Outcomes for Youth: Resourceful Families and Communities" (Margaret Beale Spencer and Dena Phillips Swanson); (7) "The Neighborhood Context of Investing in Children: Facilitating Mechanisms and Undermining Risks" (Robert J. Sampson); (8) "The Transition from School to Work: Is There a Crisis? What Can Be Done?" (Debra Donahoe and Marta Tienda); (9) "New Directions in Job Training Strategies for the Disadvantaged" (Hillard Pouncy); and (10) "Who is Getting a College Education? Family Background and the Growing Gaps in Enrollment" (David T. Ellwood and Thomas J. Kane). Each chapter contains references. (KB)

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